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09/239,584	1/29 '99	Computer-Implemented Call Forwarding Options And Methods Therefor In A Unified Messaging System
09/240,893	1/29 '99	Interactive Billing System Utilizing A Thin Web Client Interface
09/240,368	1/29 '99	System And Method To Manage Phone Sourced Messages Using A User Modifiable Field Associated With The Message
D1 09/240,434	1/29 '99	Method And Apparatus For Network Independent Initiation Of Telephony
09/240,435	1/29 '99	Apparatus And Method For Device Independent Messaging Notification
09/240,436	1/29 '99	Apparatus And Method For Channel-Transparent Multimedia Broadcast Messaging
09/239,589	1/29 '99	Voice Access Through A Data-Centric Network To An Integrated Message Storage And Retrieval System

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-15, 17-22, 27, 30, 32-35, 37 and 38 without prejudice.

Please amend claims 45-50 and 52 to read as follows:

45. (amended) A method for providing a user access over a data network to select billing records associated with an account of the user, the method comprising:

- storing billing records associated with the user's account in a data base;
- receiving a query containing one or more parameters from the user over the data network, the query seeking which of the billing records associated with the user's account satisfy the one or more parameters of the query;
- searching the data base for individual billing records associated with the user's account which satisfy the one or more parameters of the query received from the user; and

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displaying results of the searching to the user over the data network, including displaying the individual billing records associated with the user's account which satisfy the one or more parameters of the query received from the user.

46. (amended) The method of claim 45 wherein storing includes storing new billing records associated with the user's account in the data base, and providing the user access over the data network to the new billing records stored in the data base, before a bill corresponding to said new billing records is issued to the user.

47. (amended) The method of claim 45 wherein at least some of the billing records are telecommunication billing records

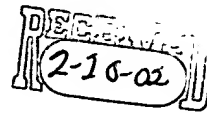
48. (amended) The method of claim 45 wherein at least some of the billing records relate to a web service.

49. (amended) The method of claim 45 wherein at least some of the billing records relate to a service selected from the group consisting of an Internet service, a telephone service, and a pager service.

50. (amended) The method of claim 45 further comprising receiving a request from the user for an alert when a user-specified criteria relating to the billing records is satisfied, and providing the alert to the user when the user-specified criteria relating to said billing records is satisfied.

52. (amended) The method of claim 45 wherein the billing records are associated with at least one telecommunication device, and further comprising receiving a request from the user to disable the telecommunication device when a user-specified criteria relating to said billing records is satisfied, and disabling the telecommunication device when the user-specified criteria relating to said billing records is satisfied.

Please cancel claims 53-56 without prejudice.

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Please add new claims 57- 65 as follows:

Sub G17 57. (new) The method of claim 45 wherein receiving includes receiving the query via a search web page, and wherein displaying includes displaying said results to the user via a search results web page.

58. (new) The method of claim 45 wherein the billing records relate to a plurality of differing communication devices.

59. (new) The method of claim 45 wherein said one or more parameters of the query are selected from the group consisting of calling device, device called, area called, transaction duration, transaction cost, date of transaction, and time of transaction.

60. (new) The method of claim 45 wherein the data network is the Internet.

DH 61. (new) The method of claim 45 wherein the data network is a private packet-switched network.

Sub G17 62. (new) A method for providing a user access over a data network to billing records associated with an account of the user, the method comprising:

Sub G17 storing billing records associated with the user's account in a data base, including new billing records for which an invoice has not yet been issued to the user;
receiving a request from the user over the data network to view the stored billing records;
and

displaying the stored billing records to the user over the data network, including displaying the new billing records for which an invoice has not yet been issued to the user.

63. (new) The method of claim 62 wherein at least some of the billing records are telecommunication billing records.

Sub G17 64. (new) The method of claim 62 wherein at least some of the billing records relate to a web service.

65. (new) The method of claim 62 wherein at least some of the billing records relate to a service selected from the group consisting of an Internet service, a telephone service, and a pager service.

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By this amendment, claim: 1-15, 17-22, 27, 30, 32-35, 37, 38 and 53-56 have been cancelled, claims 45-50 and 52 have been amended, and new claims 57-65 have been added. Thus, claims 45-52 and 57-65 are now pending. Applicant has also amended the "Cross-Reference to Related Applications" portion of the specification to update the listed titles of certain applications in accordance with amendments made in those cases, and to replace attorney docket numbers with corresponding U.S. application numbers. No new matter has been added. Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims. This attachment is captioned, "Version With Markings To Show Changes Made."

Applicant has thoroughly considered the Examiner's remarks and present claims 45-52 and 57-65 for further examination. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims in view of the following remarks.

I. The Cited Art, Including Crooks, Fails To Disclose Or Suggest Displaying To A User Individual Billing Records Associated With An Account Of The User Which Satisfy One Or More Parameters Of A Query Received From The User, As Recited By Claims 45-52 And 57-61.

Claims 45-52 presently stand rejected as being either anticipated by U.S. Pat. 5,943,656 to Crooks et al., or obvious over Crooks in view of U.S. Pat. 5,483,445 to Pickering or U.S. Pat. 6,226,364 to O'Neil.

Amended claim 45, from which claims 46-52 depend, relates to a method for providing a user access over a data network to select billing records associated with an account of the user. The method includes storing billing records associated with the user's account in a data base, and "*receiving a query containing one or more parameters from the user over the data network.*" (Emphasis supplied). This query is recited as "*seeking billing records associated with the user's account which satisfy the one or more parameters of the query.*" (Emphasis supplied.) The method further includes searching the data base for individual billing records associated with the user's account "*which satisfy the one or more parameters of the query received from the user,*" and displaying results of the searching to the user over the data network, including "*displaying the individual billing records associated with the user's account which satisfy the one or more parameters of the query received from the user.*" (Emphasis supplied). As explained in greater detail below, Crooks does not disclose receiving such a query from a user, nor does Crooks

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disclose searching for individual billing records associated with the user's account which satisfy one or more parameters of a query received from the user. Rather, Crooks merely discloses a system by which a user can view utility invoices online, either one at a time or in a consolidated format.

Among the benefits of the invention reflected in claim 45 is the ability to assist a user in identifying and reviewing individual billing records which satisfy one or more parameters of interest to the user. For example, in the case of telecommunications billing records, the user may wish to locate and view all billing records for long distance telephone calls to a particular telephone number, or to a particular place, or which incurred a particular cost. See the subject application at page 38, line 9 et seq. To do so, the user enters desired parameters of a query using, e.g., the transaction search web page shown illustratively in Fig. 7, and then reviews the results of the submitted query via, e.g., the search results web page shown illustratively in Fig. 8.

These aspects of the present invention are altogether absent in Crooks, which merely discloses a computer system by which a user can review and authorize payments of utility bills. See column 1, line 62 through column 2, line 19. As shown in Fig. 10 of Crooks, a user may view a consolidated bill showing consolidated charges from multiple utility invoices. The user may also click an "I/V" button to view a corresponding invoice online. However, a user clicking on an "I/V" button is clearly not the same as submitting a query seeking billing records associated with the user's account which satisfy one or more parameters of a query. On the contrary, clicking on the "I/V" button constitutes a request for all billing records associated with a particular invoice. See column 1, lines 65-67. Further, it is interesting to note that the words "query" and "search" (and similar terms) are not to be found in Crooks' specification (except for the "Search" icon included in the Web browser shown in Figs. 8-12 of Crooks, which initiates an Internet search, as is well known, rather than a query of individual billing records stored by the Crooks system).

In the latest Office action, the Examiner states that Crooks searches a database for individual billing records related to the user according to a command received from the user, and displays results of the searching to the user over the data network. See Office action at ¶ 2. At most, however, Crooks merely searches its database to collectively identify billing records associated with a particular user and to distinguish those billing records from billing records of other users. In no way does Crooks suggest search the billing records associated with a

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particular user's account themselves to identify individual billing records associated with the user's account which satisfy one or more parameters of a query received from the user, as recited by claim 45. In fact, Crooks does not receive a "query" of any kind from its users. Accordingly, Crooks neither anticipates nor renders obvious amended claim 45 or claims 46-52 which depend therefrom.

Moreover, the other cited references, including Pickering, fail to overcome the shortcoming of the Crooks patent discussed above, as they too lack any notion of displaying to a user individual billing records associated with an account of the user which satisfy one or more parameters of a query received from the user.

New claims 57-61 depend from independent claim 45 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as those presented above.

For all these reasons, the Examiner is respectfully requested to allow claims 45-52 and 57-61.

II. The Cited Art Lacks Any Suggestion Of Displaying To A User Over A Data Network Stored Billing Records Including New Billing Records For Which An Invoice Has Not Yet Been Issued To The User, As Recited By New Claims 62-65.

New independent claim 62 recites a method for providing a user access over a data network to billing records associated with an account of the user. The method includes storing billing records associated with the user's account in a data base, *"including new billing records for which an invoice has not yet been issued to the user."* (Emphasis supplied.) The recited method also includes receiving a request from the user over the data network to view the stored billing records, and displaying the stored billing records to the user over the data network, *"including displaying the new billing records for which an invoice has not yet been issued to the user."* (Emphasis supplied.) The cited art lacks any disclosure or suggestion of such a method.

As disclosed in the subject application, the method recited by claims 62-65 enables the user to perform use and reconciliation analyses even before an invoice for the new billing records is issued. The recited method further allows the user to incorporate near-real-time charges into expense prediction models so that payment models can be more readily managed. See, e.g., page 30, lines 14-22.